



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Bakerview EcoDairy to Build a Small-Scale On-Farm Anaerobic Digestion System.**

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. – June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – After two years of hard work, Bill Vanderkooi’s vision of building an on-farm anaerobic digestion system at his Bakerview EcoDairy took a giant leap forward last month when he secured the necessary funding to make it a reality.

Anaerobic digestion involves the decomposition of organic matter, such as livestock manure and food processing waste, in an oxygen-free vessel to produce a methane-rich-gas (biogas). Biogas is a renewable, carbon neutral gas that can produce heat, electricity, or be upgraded to a natural gas substitute. The by-product of anaerobic digestion can be land applied as fertilizer and used for animal bedding.

A readily available technology suitable to B.C. conditions, anaerobic digestion has multiple benefits for the farm and surrounding area. These benefits include reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, animal waste odour, weed seeds and pathogens, diversified revenue stream for farmers and improved nutrient management.

In 2008, Bill joined an educational mission organized by the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands & BC Milk Producers Association to visit anaerobic digestion systems in Vermont, US. While on this mission, Bill saw Avatar Energy’s anaerobic digestion system. Unlike traditional systems designed for manure from 500 or more dairy cows, Avatar’s technology is suitable for dairy farms with much fewer dairy cows. This is important for B.C., as the average dairy herd size is under 200 dairy cows. Avatar’s technology also includes a significant focus on nutrient extraction and improved nutrient management.

Bill, with the assistance of the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the Anaerobic Digestion Initiative Advisory Committee, and ARDCorp’s Renewable Agri-Energy Initiative (RAI) developed an implementation plan for his farm.

“This project is a great example of groups working together to facilitate adoption of a highly desirable renewable energy technology within B.C.’s agricultural sector”, said Renewable Agri-Energy Initiative Committee Chair Bert Miles.

Bill also received technical and financial assistance from the B.C. Bioenergy Network, B.C. Hydro and the Canada–British Columbia Environmental Farm Plan Program. The Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) is a voluntary program that allows farmers to identify environmental strengths and potential risks on their farms. The EFP assists producers in developing an action plan to reduce or eliminate these risks, as well as incorporating innovative technological advances for a wide range of farm management practices. Incentive



funding for works related to the anaerobic digester have been made available to Bakerview Ecodairy through the Beneficial Management Practice (BMP) portion of the EFP Program.

“Bakerview Ecodairy, in cooperation with the EFP program and other partners, is demonstrating the entrepreneurial spirit and technological advances taking place in the dairy sector of B.C.”, said ARDCorp Board Chair Dick Klein Geltink.



Pictured (left to right): Matt Dickson (RAI Program Manager) and Bill Vanderkooi with the Bakerview EcoDairy sign.

The Bakerview EcoDairy, located at 1356 Suma way, Abbotsford, opened its door on June 16<sup>th</sup>, with the anaerobic digestion system due for completion sometime in the fall. For more information on the Bakerview EcoDairy, please visit [www.ecodairy.ca](http://www.ecodairy.ca)

ARDCorp is a wholly owned subsidiary of the BC Agriculture Council, which represents B.C. farmers. BCAC's role is to help strengthen the competitiveness and long-term viability of B.C.'s agricultural sector. For more information about the ARDCorp, visit <http://www.ardcorp.ca/>

Funding for the Canada- British Columbia Environmental Farm Plan Program is provided through *Growing Forward*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.



For more information on the EFP, the RAI or the EcoDairy, please contact:

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